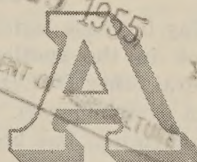
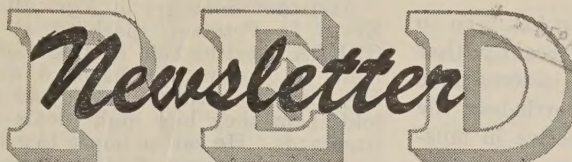
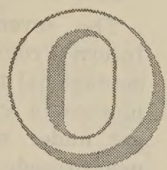
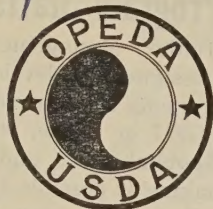


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Newsletter

ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES OF THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Vol. 7

JUNE, 1955

No. 2

PAY RAISE

The classified pay legislation will undoubtedly have been enacted before the issuance of this Newsletter, so we believe comment thereon now to be unnecessary. OPEA has taken an active part in promoting this legislation, and we believe that by and large the features most likely to affect those in the upper grades, on which we have placed special emphasis, will be included. However, equitable adjustment of upper grade salaries can not be completely effected until the ceiling on the super grades has been raised. The Administration will probably recommend action in this field before the end of June. Final action by the Congress on this before adjournment is doubtful due to the time element. This session will probably be adjourned by July 30.

FEDERAL-STATE RETIREMENT

This legislation (S. 1041 and H.R. 3687) has cleared the Senate Committee and hearings in the House are now in progress. Final and favorable action is expected thereon before adjournment of this session.

OPEDA, together with the help of the Advisory Committee on this legislation and the Educational Fund which was set up for its promotion, is of course carrying the whole load in the campaign to secure its enactment.

See more on Legislative Front on page 2.

How to Write Your Legislators

"The most powerful lobby in the nation is you," said former Congressman Jacob Javits from New York.

Realizing that many people don't know what to do about legislation they do not favor, the Friends Committee on National Legislation put out a special issue of its WASHINGTON NEWSLETTER devoted to how and when to write or contact your legislators. A copy of this newsletter is available from the OPEA Office, P.O. Box 381, Washington 4, D. C.

CHRIS HENDERSON RECEIVES SUPERIOR SERVICE AWARD

OPEDA's president, Chris Henderson, received Superior Service award June 1, from Secretary of Agriculture Benson. His award was for vision and leadership in developing the Department's training program which has served as a model in the Federal Government.

Other OPEA'S receiving awards at the ceremony in the Sylvan Theater were: distinguished service—Lester A. Schlup, FES, and Gotthold Steiner, ARS; superior service—Fred D. Al-

lison, REA; Louise O. Bercaw, Lib.; Frank L. Duley, ARS; Hilliard L. Gamble, SCS; Fisk Gerhardt, AMS; Charles B. Goetzen, FS; Lee M. Hutchins, FS; Francis T. Jones, ARS; Lorenzo B. Maun, FCS; J. H. McLeod, FES; Chester J. Olsen, FS; Earl B. Patterson, REA; J. R. Quesenberry, ARS; George A. Rogler, ARS; Evald L. Skau, ARS; Elmer Snyder, ARS; Henry M. Taylor, AMS; George S. Templeton, ARS; Joseph N. Tenhet, AMS; Robert L. Wallis, ARS; and John H. Zeller, ARS.

HEALTH-HOSPITAL PLAN

The Administration soon will send to Congress its long-delayed, new group health and hospital insurance plan for Federal workers. But action at this session is considered unlikely.

The measure would provide for comprehensive health-medical coverage for Government workers and their families. The program would be on a voluntary basis and under the bill the Government would pay a third of the cost and Federal employees the other two-thirds. They could purchase either approved insurance plans in their own community—or a standard Government-wide plan, incorporating the best features of the better known community plans.

Employees with families would pay \$104 a year, with the Government's share to be \$52. A single employee would pay \$39 a year and the Government \$19.50.

NO D. C. LUNCHEON MEETING

No luncheon meetings are scheduled for July and August in Washington. At Beltsville, however, the group may get together as the meetings of the past few months have proved very popular.

RUTH O'BRIEN HONORED

Dr. Ruth O'Brien, chief of the Home Economics Branch of the HN&HE staff, ARS, and member of the OPEA Executive Committee, was honored April 18 by Michigan State College during its centennial observance. She was cited for "leadership in the consumer movement, for active participation with industry in the development of commercial standards for textiles and improved systems of sizing for garments, and for other significant contributions to home economics."

Dues Increased

The OPEA Council voted to increase dues to \$3 per year effective January 1, 1956, to take the organization out of the red but offered two bargains.

To those joining OPEA between July 1 and December 30, \$3 will cover the remainder of 1955 and all of 1956 (18 months for the price of one year). Effective January 1, 1956, all members are offered membership at the rate of \$5 for two years.

At its meeting May 26 the Council was shown charts that graphically presented the projected cost per member per year: \$2.28 if membership is 4,000; \$2.07 if it is 5,000; and \$1.92 if it is 6,000. The membership committee (see report on page 4) is encouraged by this year's drive but anticipates only 5,000 in 1955. The stark reality of the situation is quite evident. OPEA cannot operate at a steady loss.

Civil Service Reorganized

Beginning July 1, the Civil Service Commission will consolidate inspection and classification divisions in its eleven regions and put into effect simplified and time-saving procedures for checking on agency classifications of Federal jobs.

Consolidation in the CSC Washington office was completed about two years ago. The new setup will enable regional offices to send single teams into agency field establishments to study all phases of personnel management including classification. Under the old system classifiers and inspectors made separate visits.

MORE ON THE LEGISLATIVE FRONT

Pay increase legislation has been so much in the spotlight recently that several other OPEDA objectives have been overshadowed. Nevertheless, the Organization has been active in mustering support for improved retirement benefits and for legislation that would protect our members' life insurance stake in the Department of Agriculture's Beneficial Association.

A panel discussion of the Kaplan Plan at the May 11 meeting in Washington of the Society for Personnel Administration brought out some little known background on the Kaplan Committee's functions. The original intent in creating this committee was to have it study the funding or financing of the Civil Service Retirement plan and make recommendations for a sound funding plan. This was particularly aimed at determining just what the Government's contribution to the plan should be. Later it was decided to have the Committee make a comparative study of all Government retirement plans and make any recommendations for changing the present system they felt warranted. This greatly broadened the scope of their study.

In the panel discussion, Mr. Kaplan outlined the recommendations of his Committee. These have been reviewed in detail in the public press and in previous issues of OPEDA News Letter. Mr. William Parsons, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Administration, a staff member of the Kaplan Committee, supported the Committee's recommendations. His contention is that coordination of CSR and SS is a good way of funding employees' retirement.

The CSR fund, he said, is not sufficiently adequate to carry the full burden since there is a \$10 billion unfunded deficit. That is, the fund's reserve is that much short of enough to meet its actuarial obligations if they were all payable at once. The Committee has recommended that one-third of this accrued liability be assigned to SS. They contend that this would make CSR a stronger plan.

Social Security was characterized by both Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Parsons as comparable to a fire insurance policy, with all contributing for each other's benefit. The benefit would become payable if the employee dies and leaves a surviving widow with a dependent child, or if the employee or his spouse lives to be 65. The employee acquires no equity in SS other than the benefits he may receive.

Legislation to carry out the Kaplan Plan is now being drafted.

Mr. Jerome Keating, Vice President, National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL, explained the union's

(Continued on Page 3)

Assistant Secretary Speaks

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, Ervin L. Peterson, speaking at the OPEDA meeting held at Log Lodge, April 20, commented the hard working, loyal Government employees and told them they have high ideals and standards. He said he hopes to create respect in the eyes of others because we are "Government People."

"Every employee is important from the Secretary down," he told the group. "It takes all to make an organization function. Your importance is measured by your attitude toward the organization and your associates; everyone is needed and important."

"Most agencies have 'Service' as part of their names," he pointed out, "and I have found them striving to give service. We must establish some type of philosophy to guide our ideals," he concluded.

PROBLEMS IN LEGISLATING

Frederick Belen, Chief Counsel for the Post Office and Civil Service House Committee, discussed pending legislation of interest to members of OPEDA at their meeting held at the Log Lodge, May 16.

In discussing pay raises, he said there are a million people involved in setting a pay rate for postal employees. Congress is concerned that if they raise pay they have also to raise revenue. Farmers' organizations are interested. Large mail order houses, and small ones, are all interested because the difference in postage can run into terrific sums of money. He said the Committee receives a lot of letters from Federal Employees asking why they can't go ahead with the pay bill, why they can't treat the classified and postal employees alike. They have, he said, received over 50 thousand letters concerned with pay.

He told the group that all bills and communications that relate to Federal personnel generally come to that committee—retirement, veterans preference, or basic legislation affecting employees in any way.

OTHER HONORS

Lee M. Hutchins, FS, was given the Alumni Award for distinguished service by the Washington, D. C., Alumni Club of Michigan State College at commencement exercises at East Lansing, June 5. Dr. Hutchins was recognized for original research on virus diseases of stone fruits and as an authority on virus diseases of fruit and forest trees.

Dr. Carl Hartley, FS, received the William F. Clapp Memorial Award of the Sea Horse Institute, June 17. The award was presented in recognition of his leadership in developing methods for protecting the wooden parts of ships from decay.

**Please Notify
OPEDA Office
of Change in
Address or Agency**

CSC Intern Program Starts

The seventh Junior Management Intern Program, designed to develop managerial talent among Federal employees in grade GS-7 or below, will get under way September 12 under new procedures making it possible for every interested Federal agency to appoint interns.

Nominations for field employees have been submitted to the Director, Management Intern Programs, U. S. Civil Service Commission. Nominations for Departmental employees must be made before the close of business July 11. The written examinations for the two groups will be given in July. The deadline for appointments is August 15.

The interns' course will end January 27, 1956. It will include lectures on organization and program work, work assignments, group discussion, and work at local universities.

Report of Public Service Committee

(By L. K. Wright, Chm.)

A subcommittee, composed of John L. Wells, R. C. Schmitt, Jr., and Earl W. Loveridge, prepared the following letter on a subject they have been studying for over a year:

Mr. Mac Henry Schafer,
Director of Personnel
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Schafer:

The Working Criteria Committee of OPEDA recently made a study and a brief report on Selection of Supervisors and Executives with a view that there might be some final development of material that could be distributed throughout the Department and be of real assistance in these important fields.

The committee and I were impressed with the fact that although there were scattered items, media, etc., in these fields in various Government agencies and in industry, no example of an adequate treatment of this important subject could be found.

The Civil Service Commission in 1951 published a 30-page booklet entitled "Selecting Supervisors" that contains some good material. The Air Force at several commands is currently requiring the use of a battery of supervisory and administrative judgment tests in selecting civilian foremen and supervisors. An ap-

(Continued on Page 3)

OPEDA

Issued at Washington, D. C., Each Quarter of Calendar Year.

(Not printed at Government expense)

Purpose of publication: Dissemination of information pertaining to the welfare of professional employees of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

LOOKING AHEAD IN AG RESEARCH

Less than 20 years ago—if you remember—there were no nylon, no commercial TV, no synthetic rubber, no DDT, no jet planes, no guided missiles, no antibiotics, no atom bombs. This list of recent near-miracles could easily be extended.

This impressive reminder prefaced the address of Dr. George W. Irving, Jr., at the May OPEDA luncheon meeting in Washington, D. C.

He went on to say that an Egyptian farmer of Pharaohs' time could have been equally at home with the tillage tools of the Roman farmers in the days of the Caesars, or of England in the days of Shakespeare, or the American farmer in the days of Jefferson. But, today, he would be totally bewildered by the tractor, the electric milkers, the automatic haybalers, combines, disc plows, to say nothing of airplane dusting and sprinkle irrigation.

It would take him years to learn the proper use of modern farm machinery, fertilizers, pesticides and to give him a working appreciation of soil-conservation techniques and the advantages of today's high-yielding, disease-resistant plant varieties and breeds of plants and animals. Yet only after such an education could he begin to compete in the modern farming fraternity.

Dr. Irving then pointed out that we are able to buy our food today for just about the same proportion of our take-home pay as it cost in the mid-twenties; an average of 25 percent. Today not only do we have a better diet but our food is pre-packaged, pre-cooked, prepared for us before we buy it in the modern super market.

He then called attention to some of the challenges to research in the years ahead. He mentioned the need for more basic information on soil and water conservation and management, more information on controlling diseases and parasites in plants and animals, more tender beef and more meat on hogs, better understanding of human nutrition, and new uses of agricultural products.

He concluded by suggesting the possibilities of taking water from the ocean and chemically removing the salt and making it available for irrigation; ending air-pollution; using atomic power on the farm; using atomic radiation to preserve food not to mention controlling the weather. Just as these suggestions may seem fantastic, so some of the processes now accepted as standard were but a few years ago considered equally fantastic.

Research is still the key to the great treasure chests of the universe. It is up to man to learn how to use the key. The doors are locked only by man's lack of knowledge and understanding.

Asked if the atomic blasts could have anything to do with the recent dustbowl considering the wind in the area blew from the northwest, the direction of the tests from the bowl, Dr. Irving said he could only answer "My wife says it does."

OPEDA MAY EXPAND SERVICES

The Executive Committee authorized three committees to look into ways for improving and extending OPEDA's services.

Chapter Committee: OPEDA has long recognized the need for getting field members to feel more a part of the organization. Hugh Brown, SCS, will head up the committee to decide on practical methods for helping the field members contribute more to and get more from their organization.

Participation Committee: This committee, with Harry C. Norcross, AMS, as chairman, will develop and recommend ways of giving members a more direct "say" in running OPEDA.

Extension Committee: Employees and employee groups of other Departments have shown an interest in OPEDA. The Employee Association of the Bureau of Patents invited our Executive Officer, Dillard Lasseter, to tell them about OPEDA. The Council decided last year that OPEDA should not actively promote its type of organization in other agencies. Outside interest needs to be explored further and policies and procedures developed for affiliation in case the need arises. Milton Bryan, FS, will chair this committee.

The Council also instructed the president to appoint a committee to study again the procedure used in recording and maintaining membership records and to find, if possible, more economical ways for doing the job. Sam Detweiler, ARS, is chairman.

The members of these committees are being appointed and a complete list will be published at a later date.

PUBLIC SERVICE—From Page 2

proper method of selection at these levels is an important precursor in the processes of discovery, selection and development of personnel for the higher level supervisory and executive levels.

You recently "chaired" a Training Officer Seminar at which William Oncken of the Department of the Army described an appraisal and review system under the title, "Career Development at the Executive Level." Mr. Oncken stated that this method is in use (being tried, at least) by the Air Force, National Security Agency and, on a pilot basis, by four Air Commands. Your office issued a "Career Development Guide" that contained some brief excellent material for planned development of personnel.

There is a lot of scattered information on this subject, although that pointed at the executive level is rather scarce.

The committee would like respectfully to recommend, and I endorse, that the Office of Personnel make a study of what other agencies may have done along these lines and make appropriate summaries or a composite document on the subject "Selection of Supervisors and Executives" for distribution to and benefit of the agencies of the Department.

(This has been sent to Mr. Schafer by Mr. D. B. Lasseter.)

The report also included the following:

At many field locations where there

are no USDA clubs and where more than one Department agency has employees stationed, there appears to be need for someone to take the lead in arranging for employees to get better acquainted. The committee recommends that OPEDA members be encouraged to assume this leadership and assist with strengthening the USDA club program. The committee proposes to give attention to developing a pattern to use for this purpose.

LEGISLATIVE—From Page 2

stand on the Kaplan Plan. This largely coincides with OPEDA's position. The duplication of activities, he contended, would soon result in CSR becoming part of SS. He contrasted the \$20-billion SS reserve with its unfunded deficit of some \$200-billion with CSR's reserve of \$6 billion and unfunded debt of only \$10 billion. The SS tax rate, he said, can increase and benefits can be reduced. By 1970 he claimed SS tax will reach 7½ percent and could go as high as 10 to 12 percent.

In our CSR plan we know where we stand, he said, adding that we should look at the substance rather than the glitter. The AFL, Mr. Keating stated, is 100 percent opposed to the Kaplan Plan. It is giving its support to increasing retirement benefits within the framework of CSR, as provided in H.R. 3791, introduced by Representative James H. Morrison (D., La.). OPEDA is giving its support to the principle outlined in H.R. 3791.

Policyholders in the Department of Agriculture's Beneficial Association were informed on May 2 by the Association that legislation has been introduced to safeguard their members' term insurance policies. The new low cost Government group life insurance has made it impossible for such associations to compete. S. 1792, introduced on April 25, by Chairman Olin D. Johnston of the Senate PO & CSC (D., S. C.), would authorize the Government to assume the insurance obligations of any nonprofit association of Federal employees with its members.

At a meeting of OPEDA Council on May 26, it was voted to support S. 1792. Accordingly, a statement was prepared for presentation by our Executive Secretary at a hearing on this bill before the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee on June 9. A few days before this date, the hearing was cancelled. The Administration has apparently withdrawn its opposition to the principle of S. 1792 and is now willing to propose similar legislation to carry it out. OPEDA will continue to support such legislation when it is considered.

OPEDA is also making itself heard in behalf of S. 956, introduced by Senators Smith and Case of New Jersey. This would provide that compensation of a Federal officer or employee shall be subject to State tax only in the State where he is domiciled.

This has been one of the busiest and most productive years for OPEDA's Economic Committee.

RALPH W. SHERMAN, Chairman.

CONGRATULATIONS

The first new OPEDA member from the Denver office of CSS is Kenneth S. Alexander.

Hamilton Laudani, station leader at the Stored-Product Insects Section of AMS in Savannah, Ga., recruited seven new members, making the station membership 100 percent of all eligible personnel.

James W. Dye, SCS, Bowling Green, Ky., reports 12 new members and a 100 percent paid-up membership of all eligibles.

Boyce D. Ezell recruited 14 new members from the Quality Maintenance and Improvement Section, Biological Sciences Branch of AMS, at Beltsville.

Here and There

Dana Parkinson, FS, retired June 30, after 45 years with that agency.

Walt Dutton, former executive officer, sends a new address: % FOA Mission, Agricultural Department, Zomba, Nyasaland, Central Africa.

Joe Young, editor of the Federal Spotlight column of the Washington Star, said "OPEDA has done a great deal toward bettering the lot of professional employees."

Opeda Membership Box Score

Our membership goal is "5,000 in '55," and we are well along the road to this goal as you can see from the box score shown below. It depends on how you look at it as to which agency is ahead. Based on total membership SCS is ahead, with ARS close behind. Based on percent of potential membership signed up, Warren Mather's FCS is ahead, Ed Leker's FES is second, Joe Week's ACPS third, and Thorwald Jorgensen's CEA is fourth. George Musgrave and his SCS folks have signed up the most new members, with Tom Kuzelka's AMS second, and Ken Butler's ARS third.

All agencies are due credit for the fine showing OPEDA has made this year in increasing its memberships. Total membership now totals over 4,000—the highest ever. But there are thousands of employees in Agriculture who need only an opportunity to join OPEDA. Why not ask one of your fellow workers to join OPEDA—and help to make it "5,000 in '55."

Agency	Approximate Potential Membership	Members on Rolls Jan. 1, '55	New Members Since Jan. 1, '55		Total Membership June 13, '55	Percent of Potential Membership Signed up
ACPS	30	9	11		20	67
AMS	4,300	346	255		601	14
ARS	8,100	802	182		984	12
ASU	800	77	9		86	11
CEA	70	19	28		47	60
CSS	4,100	43	71		114	3
FAS	270	33	28		61	23
FCA	400	21	13		34	9
FCIC	160	2	7		9	6
FCS	70	29	27		56	80
FES	150	57	52		109	73
FS	5,700	541	26		567	10
F&D	600	18	24		42	7
FHA	3,150	99	9		108	3
SCS	7,500	594	459		1,053	14
REA	600	73	84		157	26
Total	36,000	2,763	1,285		4,048	11

OPEDA Needs More Members to Give Added Prestige to Those Who Speak for Us.

CUT ON THIS LINE AND MAIL

Organization of Professional Employees
of the U. S. Department of Agriculture
P. O. Box 381 — Washington 4, D. C.

Date _____, 195__

Application hereby is made for membership in the Organization of Professional Employees of the United States Department of Agriculture, the annual dues of which are \$2.00 per year and for which there is no initiation or membership fee.

Name (First name in full: Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr.) _____

Address _____

Bureau _____ Div. or Branch _____

Title _____ Classification: GS- _____

Enclosed is check (), currency (), money order () for \$2.00 for 195__ dues. (Checks or money orders may be made payable to Org. Prof. Employees USDA, or simply to O.P.E.D.A.)

(Signature of Applicant)

OPEDA
P. O. Box 381
Washington 4, D. C.
Mrs. Lela Caswell
Reference Section
Library, USDA
Sec. 34.65(e), P.L.&R.